

Respectfully yours.

That letter is at sanders.senate.gov. I think we have many thousands of signatures on that letter already. I hope we can get more. If people prefer to go to the White House Web site, they can do that. That would be important. The main point is that the President has to know that we will not accept a deficit reduction package that just comes out heavily on working families.

The reason I raise these issues today is that I am, frankly, very worried because we have gone through this negotiating process two times in the last 6 months. That is why we need the American people to weigh in on this issue.

In fact, we have seen this movie before. The Republicans, led by their extreme right wing, have been successful in getting their way because of their refusal to compromise and willingness to hold the credit and economic security of the American people hostage.

As many people will remember, in December the Republican leadership was prepared to hold the middle-class tax cuts and unemployment benefits hostage in order to extend the Bush tax breaks to the top 2 percent. As we all know, the Republicans won. As a result, over \$200 billion was added to the deficit over the next 2 years. Not only did the Bush tax breaks for the wealthy get extended, they also got a reduction in the estate tax which benefits the top three-tenths of 1 percent.

Specifically, the December tax cut agreement extended the Bush income tax rates, and it cost us very substantially.

It is not just the Bush tax cuts that were extended. In March of this year our Republican friends said that unless we made very significant cuts, the Republicans were prepared to shut down the government, disrupt the economy, and deny paychecks to some 800,000 Federal workers—if they could not get their way. They said: We are going to shut down the government unless you make these Draconian cuts.

One of the cuts I was disturbed about—among many—was \$600 million to build new community health centers, which would keep people alive and end up saving money. There are other Draconian cuts, as well. They also cut Pell grants, making it harder for students to go to college. The point is, they acted as bullies and said: If we don't get our way, we are prepared to shut down the government.

Now we are back here again, and this is part 3 of the act. Part 1 was whether the middle class would get its tax breaks and whether unemployment benefits would be extended. The Republicans won. Part 2 is whether the government would be shut down. The Republicans mostly won and got almost everything they wanted.

Here we are, act 3, the biggest act of all; and the question is whether the Republicans will, in fact, not raise the debt ceiling. If they do that, it is quite possible that not only our country but

the entire world might be plunged into a major financial crisis.

This is what they are threatening: If we don't get everything we want, we are prepared not to pay our government's debt for the first time in the history of our country. We are prepared to see interest rates go up in a very fragile global economy. And we are prepared to see more and more instability.

In many ways, the Republicans in Washington are acting like schoolyard bullies. As we know, bullying is a very serious problem in our schools. Every educator worth his or her salt would tell us that when dealing with a bully, we must not give in to their tactics or tolerate their temper tantrums or allow them to hurt innocent people. We have to deal with them sternly and consistently. We cannot allow them to win by dictating the rules of the game and trampling over everybody else if they don't get their way.

We have a serious debt problem that must be solved, but it must be solved in a way that is fair and in a way that calls for shared sacrifice.

Let me conclude by suggesting that the American people are concerned about the deficit. They are also concerned about the economy, and they are also concerned that so many of our people—of all ages, in all parts of this country—are hanging on economically by their fingernails.

The American people understand that it is just not fair at all to come down on people who are already hurting and leave unscathed the wealthiest people in this country and large profitable corporations.

What I say today to the President of the United States is this: Mr. President, stand tall. Do not yield to Republican blackmail. Stand with the vast majority of the American people who believe that deficit reduction requires shared sacrifice—that everybody makes a sacrifice, not just working families, the elderly, the sick, and the poor.

With that, I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO OPAL OVERBEY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a devoted and hardworking Kentuckian. Ms. Opal Overbey has been honored in her hometown and will have her life story submitted to the Library of Congress for being an extraordinary woman who dedicated her life to her family and her work.

Born December 2, 1929, on Tom Cat Trail in Laurel County, KY, Opal was the fourth of eight children. Growing up, Opal remembers a childhood filled with love, laughter and hard work. Following the guidance of her parents—her mother, a committed housewife and her dad, a diligent farmer—she learned that a little hard work and determination goes a long way. Driven by a desire to be independent and earn her own money, Opal worked two jobs.

After many years at the local laundromat as well as working part time at the Crystal Kitchen, Opal moved into a small room in a house behind a jeweler with her cousins. Soon after, she met her husband of 62 years, Virgil Overbey.

When Opal was 17 she and Virgil got married. Together they had four children. Being a mother at a young age was a difficult feat to master, but Opal was determined to give her children a childhood similar to her own. As they got older, her eldest son Jim found a common interest with his mom, and together they built a greenhouse supplying flowers and crops for the community. After Virgil Overbey's unfortunate death on November 24, 2008, the greenhouse was a way for the family to stay together and enjoy each other's company while doing something they all loved.

Opal's greenhouse business continues today. She says that working at the greenhouse has always been a pleasurable experience, but it's the people and the customers that make it worthwhile: "I think in life you have to just work and treat people right, and be honest and the Lord will bless you." Her children have grown up and started families of their own, and Opal continues to help in any way that she can.

Kentucky is fortunate to have a hardworking and devoted woman like Opal Overbey. At 81 years of age, Opal has lived a lifetime of service to her community. I am sure her children Jim, Denver, Glenda, and Evelyn, as well as her whole family, are very proud of everything that she has accomplished and provided for her loved ones.

Mr. President, the Laurel County Sentinel Echo recently published an article highlighting Ms. Opal Overbey's life and career. I ask unanimous consent that the full article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

[FROM THE SENTINEL ECHO, LAUREL COUNTY,
JUNE 8, 2011]

LONDON'S LIVING TREASURES: PART 3

In the third installment of the Living Treasures project, we meet 81-year-old Opal Overbey, a fixture at Overbey's Greenhouse on Ky. 229. The only Living Treasure nominee who is a native of Laurel County, Overbey shared her life story, one that is characterized by love of family, love of the land and a tireless work ethic.

"I was born Dec. 2, 1929 here in Laurel County on Tom Cat Trail near Bush. My mother just raised all us youngin's, she was a housewife, and my dad farmed everything, tobacco, corn, whatever people grew then. He had about 80 acres of pastureland. He was a good, honest man. My mom was the same. There was eight of us, six sisters and two brothers. I was the fourth child down.

I had a happy childhood. Honey, we just played and had fun and worked also. Dad always made us hoe corn and whatever he was doing. He learned us to work. But we would play Hoopy Hide, tag, hopscotch, whatever kids played at that time. We used to take washes down to the creek where the water

was. And we'd swim, we had a good swimming hole place. That was fun—fun, we loved that. We had a childhood that was as normal as normal could be.

I went to Weaver School, a one-room school. We would walk to school, to and from it was probably about three miles. I wasn't in particularly a great student. I really didn't like school; I would rather stay home and wash clothes or something, if she would let me. I didn't really like any subject, except recess.

Whenever I was a kid you didn't go to the store to get what you needed, you put it up in the summertime. That was what she fed us on. She had a big garden, potatoes, corn, beans, cucumbers, just anything she could get seed for. She saved quite a lot of seed and kids used to go around and sell packets of seed back then and that's how she would get cucumber and beets and stuff like that.

My chores were milking, gathering the eggs, cleaning up, dishes, drawing water, we drew our water out of a well, you know. Mom caught her wash water when it came off the house. No plumbing, not when I was home, no electricity.

We had a big house with plenty of room. It was like everybody else's house then. It was made of weatherboarding. Our nearest neighbors were about a quarter of a mile away. A lot of them was my relatives. Uncle Perry and Aunt Rhilde Root and Ed and Polly Jones lived real close to us.

I had an uncle, Charlie, that got a radio, and we would go listen to the Grand Ole Opry at Uncle Charlie's on Saturday night. I was probably 6 or 8 years old. We would just sit around and listen at the radio.

We went to Flatwoods Christian Church. That was the only place we had to go. We went there quite a lot. I liked to go to church. Everybody in the community went, it was just a gathering place. You didn't have no movies or anything like that back then. Sometimes mom would take us all to a neighbor's house and we'd have dinner. Sometimes they went over with us. We had a real close neighborhood there, very good people.

Our mother basically made all of our dresses until we were big enough to work and earn them ourselves. I remember one dress in particular. Back then, I don't know if I was a state thing or something, anyway, we got some free clothes. That was my first ready-made dress and I never forgot that. It was just a solid brown, cotton summer dress, but it was made pretty and I loved it.

I was probably about 12 when I stopped going to school. I didn't get very much schooling. I wasn't interested in continuing. I just wanted to work.

I went to London and got me a little job in the laundry, and I worked there for Mr. Terry until me and Virgil got married. They had these presses and usually I pressed jeans and passed them on to somebody else. Me and a couple of my cousins, Eula Mae Smith and Deloris Smith, we got us a room in a big house that sat back from Barton's Jewelry Store and I worked, part-time now, not all the time.

London was pretty low back then. I remember when they had boards for the sidewalks. People tied their horses and their wagons at the foot of Manchester Street, where it started leveling out. Going out from London, it was on the left. Then they finally got Black Brothers buses running from Manchester to London, and then we still had to walk two or three miles down to catch that bus. A lot of walking went on back in them days. I went home every weekend on that bus.

I guess I got grown before my time and I wanted to work. I'm thinking I made about 20 cents an hour. I believe, best I can remem-

ber. I made \$18 to \$25 a week, but that was good money then. I always tried to buy me an outfit. You could buy one for a little bit of nothing, and I'd get me a new dress or a new something or other each week. I liked working. Honey, I liked making money, that's mostly what you worked for, ain't it? I worked off and on at the laundry for three or four years. I also worked at a restaurant part-time too, Crystal Kitchen. It was right by the bank, it was First National then. I would serve cheeseburgers and hot dogs and that's basically what we did. But when dad had gardening and stuff going on, I worked at home. That's why I only worked part-time. He'd let me work if we didn't have anything to do on the farm.

Honey, I met Virgil, who would become my husband, about three times. Before I even knew who he was, he'd always try to take me home. The first time I met him it was way on Blackwater or Cane Creek. We had took a cousin home and that's where I met him first. I was very young, probably 15.

When I first went out with him was probably maybe six or eight months after that. He was the nephew of my aunt that lived across the creek there. That was a great courtship. First place we went was to Renfro Valley. That was actually my first date with him. Honey, we got there too late for the first show so we just didn't wait for the second one, we come back home. Didn't even get to go in. I was sort of disappointed, but was having a good time. I knew right away that I liked Virgil. He was just a nice person. He was someone you was comfortable with.

I was barely 17 when we married. He was 23. He had just got out of the Army, he was in World War II. He asked me to marry him when I was 16, but I said, "Wait 'til I get 17." When I was, he just plain asked, we just set the date right after he asked me. I think maybe then I was staying with one of my aunts where she was having baby. I did that a lot when I was a kid. I worked all the time. I think that was my hobby.

We married Jan. 23, 1943. Lived here ever since. He had a couple of uncles that drove taxis and that's how we got to London to get married. Back then, you didn't have a big wedding. We got married by Morgan Williams, he was a preacher back then, at the courthouse. My aunt and uncle went with us to sign me. Honey, I wore a pretty, little, blue cotton dress, don't remember what I paid for it but it wasn't much. Then we took a taxi back.

We lived together almost 62 years. We stayed with his mother and dad for a week or two and we moved in this house. Virgil built it. Over the years, we just done things we wanted to the house. At the time, he went to work at a sawmill and worked there for a few years and then he went to Chaney's logging. Then he went straight into farming. That's basically what we've always done.

I was 18 when had my first child, my son Jim. Then three years later, I had Denver. Later on, I had two girls, Glenda and Evelyn was the baby. I had Evelyn six years after Glenda. I spread 'em out. I had little children there for about 20 years.

I remember having Jim. It was terrible. I had him at home, you know. Doctor Walthen, he came to the house. I think he was born about 2 in the morning. Doctor Walthen stayed I think a couple of nights because I had false labor. He hunted him a bed and went to sleep and stayed until Jim was born.

Once he was born, I just loved him to death—like any mother that's a good mother loves her children. Being a young mother, that took a little training. Virgil's mother, Nanny Overbey, she come every day and bathed the baby and did whatever needed to be done. I was grateful for her help because I didn't know the first thing.

I raised my children how I was raised. My kids played outside a lot. My days were getting up and cooking for them and doing my washing. I always cooked 'em three meals a day so that takes a good part of your day right there. Honey, I canned a lot, and potatoes saved a lot of lives back then. Of a morning, you'd fry eggs. Virgil always kept us plenty of meat in the freezer, so I'd fix meat and gravy, everybody always had gravy then, and biscuits. I cooked full meals then. That was how I was raised too. That's one thing you done, you ate good.

Honey, we had enough to get by on. You didn't have any bills back then. There was no bills to pay, so you just fed your family and bought what you had to buy and did whatever you had to do. We sure wasn't rich by no means, but we got by.

We got electricity the evening after Jim was born, on the 19th of October in '43. Oh, that was great. Got a refrigerator and a washer and the few things you had to have then. That beat washing on the board.

Jim was the leader. He always made sure they caught the bus on time; he was very reliable. They went to Camp Ground. They liked school pretty well. Well, Denver didn't, but Jim graduated from high school. My oldest girl got married about 15 and Evelyn started high school, and quit.

When Jim was about 9, he sold the first bushel of beans we ever sold. Set up on the road, it was just a gravel road back then. I think he got \$1.50 or \$2. Jim was like me, he liked to make money, he liked to have something going all the time. He was very inventive. From there, we just kept planting other stuff. It was right up my alley because we like to do the same thing. Selling, I was better at selling than anything else, that's what I liked to do. Both of my grandads had little country stores so I had that in me.

When Jim and his wife come back from Indiana, he started a greenhouse on the porch. Of an evening, we'd go and pick beans after we'd close from selling. We'd sell up near the road at first and several years ago, we backed off of the road when the main road come through, it got too dangerous. It got so hot that one year we put fans in the greenhouse there and that cooled us. It was a lot more comfortable when we moved off the road.

Having a greenhouse wasn't common back then, not in this community. It took a while. We even sold in the yard under a tree for a while. And we'd roll our wagon with the shade as the day wore on.

Virgil died Nov. 24, '08. We lived together 62 years and that was a great loss for me. He always farmed, that's what he loved to do. And he loved working in the greenhouse and he watered and did a lot of the greenhouse work. It was always a family affair, we all worked.

Jim still runs the greenhouse and I just help him a little whenever I can, which is basically every day, except Sunday. Honey, I still work anywhere from eight to 10 hours a day. I go over there at 8 and we was closing at 6, but now we're there 'til 7 or 7:30. But I don't do a lot of work back in the greenhouse. I like visiting with people. It's just what I like.

Since Virgil's gone, we don't do a whole lot of gardening. He was our plower, our planter, everything. He was a good farmer, Virgil was. I've worked ever since just for my children, help my youngin's, that's what I like to do. I like to talk and visit with people and I meet so many nice people. I do anything I can to help someone who comes along, that's my nature. I think in life you have to just work and treat people right, and be honest and the Lord will bless you."

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HAWAII 2011 NATIONAL HISTORY DAY WINNERS

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I would like to congratulate a group of exceptional students and teachers from the State of Hawaii for their participation in the 2011 Kenneth E. Behring National History Day Contest. This year's theme, "Debate and Diplomacy in History: Successes, Failure, Consequences," was the starting point for student projects nationwide.

The National History Day, NHD, is a highly regarded academic program for elementary and secondary school students. Each year, over a half a million students participate in the NHD contest where students choose historical topics related to a theme and conduct extensive primary and secondary research through libraries, archives, museums, oral history interviews and historic sites. Once students draw their conclusions about their topics' significance in history, they present their work in original papers, Web sites, exhibits, performances and documentaries. The projects are entered into competitions in the spring at local and state levels where they are evaluated by professional historians and educators. National History Day culminates with the Kenneth E. Behring National Contest at the University of Maryland at College Park each June.

This year, two student teams from Hawaii received national honors. Kamaile Aluli, Kaylee Alana Miller and Truman Spring from Laie Elementary School placed first in the junior Web site competition with their entry titled, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: the Battle over Hetch Hetchy." Their teachers are Serena Tuliloa and Colleen Spring. Moanalua High School students Janal Kim, Keri Ann Nagaishi and Kelly Zakimi took second place for their senior group exhibit, "Creation of Pakistan." Their teacher is Angela Brooks.

As a former educator, I am pleased to see our keiki succeeding on a national level. Throughout my career in Congress, I have worked closely with my colleagues to ensure that students in Hawaii and the nation have quality teachers, schools and academic programs. The Kenneth E. Behring National History Day Contest is one such program that offers children who have a passion for history, a way of rewarding them for their hard work.

Once again I offer my sincere congratulations and aloha to all the students and teachers who participated in the 2011 Kenneth E. Behring National History Day Contest and wish them all success in their academic futures.●

AWWA PIPE TAPPING CHAMPIONS

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I wish to congratulate the Honolulu Board of Water Supply, HBWS, women's team that won the American Water Works

Association, AWWA, Pipe Tapping Contest in Washington, DC, on June 15, 2011. Known as the Wahine, the HBWS women captured the first place title for a second year in a row at the 130th AWWA Annual Conference with a time of 2:35.81 minutes. This was the third AWWA Championship for the team, having won in 2010 and 2005.

The Wahine faced off against four rivals in a contest where top utility teams race to tap a cement-lined, ductile iron pipe. The women of HBWS demonstrated amazing skill and showcased the expertise of AWWA members.

The HBWS Wahine includes Cat Sawai, setter, Susan Oda, copper, and Danielle Ornellas, cranker. The team was led by coach Gary Fernandez.

I congratulate the Honolulu Board of Water Supply Wahine on their accomplishment, and I wish all of them the best in their future endeavors. I extend the same congratulations to all members of the Honolulu Board of Water Supply who participated in this year's AWWA Conference on a job well done.●

TRIBUTE TO LARRY AND BARBI WEINBERG

• Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." Today I honor two great Americans who have made a wonderful life by what they have given. Lawrence and Barbara Weinberg, or Larry and Barbi as their family and friends know them, have given much to their faith, to their country, and to their family and friends. Today I call attention to their service that the good life they have made can serve as an example to us all.

Larry answered our Nation's call to duty and served in the U.S. Infantry in France during World War II. He was nearly killed by the explosion of a landmine. While he was injured on the ground, a German soldier bayoneted him in the stomach. He remained motionless and isolated for over thirteen hours. Against all odds, he was rescued by a Catholic Army Chaplain and spent a year recovering in the hospital.

After Larry was discharged from both the hospital and the Army, he met Barbi. It was the summer of 1946. They married 6 months later. Larry then started a Los Angeles home-building business. He began with just four houses, but built his company to become the Larwin Group Companies, the largest privately owned single-family housing producer in the United States. He later became the principal owner and CEO of the Portland Trailblazers from 1975-1988, and served on the board of governors of the National Basketball Association from 1980-1983.

Together, Larry and Barbi have been unwavering supporters of the Jewish community and Israel. In 1973, Barbi was elected president of the Jewish Federation Council of Greater Los Angeles, becoming the first woman to be elected president of a major federation

in the United States. She used her position to expand the previously secular Foundation to Orthodox, Conservative, and Reformed Jewish congregations.

Larry also continued his work supporting the American-Israeli relationship. He was elected president of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, AIPAC, in 1976 for 5 years, later serving as its chairman from 1982-1987. He is known as the founder of modern AIPAC.

Larry established the Jewish Foundation Barbi Weinberg Chai Award to honor individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the enhancement of and appreciation for Jewish life. Barbi sponsored a program to prepare junior and senior high school students with the knowledge, confidence, and training to speak up for themselves and for Israel, and to fight anti-Semitism and anti-Israel bias on college campuses. These programs are so important for our Nation's youth.

In 1984, Barbi founded the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. This research foundation has become one of the most influential think tanks in Washington, advising policymakers on Middle East issues.

Larry and Barbi have lived a life of dedicated public service. They are most proud, however, of their loving dedication to their family. During their 64 years together, Larry and Barbi have 4 children, 12 grandchildren, and 3 great-grandchildren. All are hardworking, successful Americans that share Larry and Barbi's commitment to public service.

Larry and Barbi truly have made a good life by what they have given. I am proud to consider myself a friend. And may their service be an example to us all.●

LUBEC, MAINE

• Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, Lubec, ME, is the easternmost town in the United States, the place where the rising Sun first shines on America. That unique geographic location has special meaning in this, Lubec's bicentennial year. Today, as they have for two centuries, the people of Lubec greet every day with the optimism and determination each dawn brings.

Located on a slender peninsula that separates Passamaquoddy Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, Lubec is more than a town on the sea. It is a town of the sea. Its 95 miles of shoreline once were lined with cargo-filled docks, shipyards, sail makers, canneries, smokehouses, and tide-powered sawmills. Its namesake, Lubeck, Germany, was chosen to emulate that ancient seafaring city's role as a center of open and free trade. The magnificent sea captain homes throughout the town stand as monuments to Lubec's role as an early hub of America's global commerce.

Now, it is a shoreline of aquaculture pens, lobster traps, and urchin and scallop boats. For those seeking a genuine downeast Maine experience, the